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ABSTRACT

The relationship between effective schools research and the cultural aspect of school organizations are examined in this paper. The first part discusses how effective schools projects are designed and implemented as opposed to what is actually practiced. Differences between "tinkering" with existing structures, a strategy to maintain the status quo, and making substantive changes are discussed in the second part. The third part examines the influence of sociocultural conditions that produce different educational experiences based on race, class, and gender on program implementation. If reformed schools are to develop, two major considerations must be addressed--organizational development and learning. Four principles of learning and the organizational structures that support learning in urban settings are described and it is concluded that teachers and administrators must make substantive changes rather than tinkering with existing arrangements. (Contains 33 references.) (LMI)

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Symposium Paper:

EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS, TINKERING AND SCHOOL CULTURES: MAINTAINING SCHOOLS THAT SORT BY RACE CLASS AND GENDER

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EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS, TINKERING AND SCHOOL CULTURES:
MAINTAINING SCHOOLS THAT SORT BY RACE, CLASS AND GENDER.

In 1978 & 79, Ron Edmonds announced outcomes from research he had done while at Harvard, that became known as Effective Schools Research. Since then this research has become part of the language of numerous schools and colleges of education. His five correlates are well known by most every educator that has taken the time to become moderately informed this past decade. School district after school district have Effective School projects and programs. Brookover and Lezotte (1978) and other colleagues and co-researchers of Edmonds have carried on this work after his death. Before his death and in the carrying on, this Effective Schools research, in the historical context of research and change in American schooling, may have become, unfortunately just another tinkering project.

That is, it is very difficult to discover any wide spread, fundamental or substantive change in schooling outcomes as a result of effective school efforts. For example, in Kansas City there were 18 schools involved in an "Effective Schools" project. After five years, eight of these schools have shown only modest to good improvement in student outcomes. But the improvement is across the board. Everyone got a little better and the bottom quarter improved the most. But the outcomes are still highly correlated with race and class. Four other schools have shown similar results but more minimal gains and the rest have shown no improvement at all. This outcome from Effective School projects in Kansas city is consistent with Effective School projects in school districts throughout the country: for example New York, Milwaukee, Chicago, etc. There are several reasons for this and to understand them helps us understand why efforts to reform and restructure schools all too often seem to amount to tinkering with existing schooling.

A logical, and we believe appropriate, rationale for these hit and miss outcomes is related to a cultural aspect of school organizations (Sarason 1990, Goodlad 1984, Cohen, Marsh & Olsen 1972, Deal & Kennedy 1982). For twenty years,

beginning with the Mann et.al study in 1974, the strongest research data about school improvements establishes that fundamental change is idiosyncratic to a particular site and a combination of chance assembling of certain people who are able to create and use effective relationships and conditions (in short the organizational culture of the place). These effective relationships and conditions appear to be part of the school climate or ethos that Edmonds and others discuss (Edmonds, 1978, Rutter, et.al. 1979). In the normal course of events, when these special schooling relationships and conditions are created, they often do not endure long. People are moved on " to more exciting experiences", like working with adults, the school population changes, central office support dwindles, and etc. This organizational culture in American schooling has been discussed extensively in the literature (Crandall, Loux, & Miles 1983, Sarason,1990, Rossman, Corbett, & Firestone, (1985)) and many others. The Kansas City and other School Districts are no exception to this systemic condition, as related to "Effective Schools" projects.

Also we know that a basic covenant of school implementation (Parish & Arends, 1981, Crandall, Loux, & Miles, 1983, Rogers, 1972) is that teachers and principals believe that they have a right to adapt any innovation to fit their context and condition. " No one has to do it exactly as they did it in the training", is a highly regarded and fixed teacher covenant at all levels of schooling. The natural outcome of such a cultural covenant is that innovations get adapted to fit existing organizational cultures, or as we have indicated it amounts to tinkering with what is. Exceptions to this in the literature are where someone, usually an administrator has "held their feet to the fire" (Miles and Loux, 1983, Corbett, et. al. 1987) and not allowed adaptation or someone so committed to the innovation is also such an insider and member of the local schooling culture that he/she knows what buttons to push to get a real change. In the vast majority of cases, change starts with the

best of intentions, and then adaptation starts and the natural thing over a year or so, is things are just how they were.

The conventional wisdom will be that "the innovation didn't work". When members of an organization make comments like, "the more things change, the more they stay the same", or " just wait, the pendulum will swing back", then a very stable organizational culture is in place. Incremental change, implementations of single innovations and similar approaches, will most likely result in tinkering and no fundamental change in the organizations outcomes. People involved may have intended to change things and everyone worked in good faith, but they also worked within existing ways of doing things in school cultures.

Effective School efforts are no exception to this cultural condition in schools. In order to see how this works, let's discuss how Effective Schools projects are implemented and designed as opposed to what often passes for Effective Schools in practice. Then we will discuss the difference between tinkering and substantive changes. Finally, we can discuss a question that must be discussed as a fundamental part of Effective School implementation: is implementation affected because of long standing historical social/cultural structures, beliefs, values, traditions and world views in the United States and thus in schools: social/cultural conditions that provide different levels and quality of education based upon race, class and gender. Does the social reproduction factor impact or limit implementation?

Beginning at least with the early work of Miles (1964) and continuing on through the 60's, 70's and 80's, it became increasingly clear that certain organizational conditions produce organizations that are more productive. Such organizations have a different flavor to them and produce qualitatively different outcomes. Edmonds five correlates therefore were not new or fundamentally different

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from this already known knowledge. The organizational development approach to leadership and management came out of the social science approach to understanding how organizations work, that blossomed in the United States after World War II. And although most of the research and implementation strategies were developed in the United States, by the 1970's it increasingly became known as "Japanese Management".

What Edmonds added to this knowledge was that school organizations that seem to have this type of organizational profile, also produce schooling outcomes that are not correlated with race or class. Edmonds contended that his data showed that in such schools, all of which were elementary, whatever percentage of students in the school from privileged backgrounds were above average in achievement scores, the same percentage from less privileged families were above average in achievement scores, and this finding was across the board relative to top and bottom quartiles. Thus he made the argument that schools could make a difference separate from other social/cultural factors in the society.

This was and remains a radical notion in American schooling. Previous data regarding schooling outcomes in the United States have indicated that there is a direct and strong correlation between social class, race and gender and performance on achievement tests. The strongest correlation for achievement on test scores is with social class. The Coleman Studies (1966) particularly established this social class, racial and gender correlation. Test publishing companies now publish data that allow school districts to compare their outcomes with school districts of similar school populations. Their data clearly establish, class, race and gender correlations with test results.

Not surprisingly, a home-school partnership has historically been considered to be an essential ingredient to having a successful school, in American schooling. Such a partnership corresponds highly with social class and learning expectations.

Recent research at Ohio University (1992) also indicated that the two strongest correlations with achievement in school outcomes are social class of the family and attendance. Many studies (Shore 1986, Giroux 1988, Fine 1990, Freier 1988) to cite only a few, establish that such factors as race, gender and the social level of the family determine the expectations, curriculum, available academic courses, and life choices provided in almost all schools public and private in America.

These researchers have identified and described how schooling establishes practices, processes and procedures that maintains and continues this race, class and gender sorting in American schools. Actually, such authors as (Bowles and Gintis , 1971, 86) have discussed this social reproduction aspect of schooling for some time. That it occurs is beyond dispute. Why and how it occurs is still disputed depending upon the particular social/political views and interpretation researchers bring to their analysis. What we do know is that in the United States thus far Effective Schools research as implemented, has resulted in a modest level of school improvement in some schools, but the vast majority remain essentially unchanged. There is scant, if any, evidence in the literature that in fact even effective schools that have accomplished improved achievement have also eliminated the class, race and gender correlation. It is tinkering by any definition.

An argument we make is that tinkering is one of cultures' ways of maintaining the status quo. (Parish & Aquila, 1991, Eubanks & Levine, 1987, Argyris 1982, Sarason 1990), and many others, argue that all organizations develop cultures and these cultural ways have as their essential purpose the continuation and preservation of the organizations culture. An organization's culture generally reflects and maintains the cultural ways of those who founded the organization involved. An organization's cultural ways continue long after the founders and the social context they represent are gone or have substantively changed. This is true

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for General Motors and U.S. Steel and it is true for schooling in America. In the case of American schooling the foundations were laid, over three hundred and fifty years ago. There has not been any substantive change in this purpose of schooling and consequently outcomes. The system of schooling in America is a stable culture (system) as Sarason (1990) says.

In case the point is not clear a brief example might help clarify. The dichotomy between the "practioner" and the "researcher" is well known. Wolcott (1978) calls it a moiety: members of the same family or tribe but with very separate and different cultural ways- Teachers vs. Technocrats. The evidence seems clear that how things are implemented into schools is through a system of workshops and training <techniques> often done by a translator (someone with a foot in both camps). The practioner is encouraged to make his/her own sense of it (it's called mutual adaptation) and then to implement that which makes sense within a given social context. What that means simply is that things are adapted to fit what is already going on--tinkering.

Any serious effort to discuss reforming or restructuring an organization < substantive change> is a discussion about culture and cultural change: a discussion about "the way things are done" and how that is what must change. About how things are done not in relation to techniques, but in terms of what is assumed and believed to be true and to be the work of the school in terms of a different vision of the purpose of the place. This is especially true of a cultural enterprise like schooling. After all the primary purpose of schooling is as we have seen, social reproduction. If, for example, teachers and principals believe in the culture sorting of the "normal curve", then they will not believe that all children are capable of learning and being developed for advanced and continuous achievement. They will believe that some are better than others and that's the way it is.

Therefore as they do their work and "adapt" new programs, part of the adaptations will include this belief. Getting rid of such cultural beliefs is an incredibly difficult and dangerous (for those attempting such a change) task.

Secondly, we suggest there is a good deal of cultural mischievousness involved in current discussions regarding educational reform. The world and consequently the United States is in a historical period of great social-economic-cultural change. Not only are third world developing nations, but nations from the two general industrial cultures are undergoing significant change and transformation as well. Cultural survival through the 21st Century may then require a society or nation to be willing to make substantive social/cultural changes. Therefore, some educational reformers declare that John Dewey was correct (1944) when he advocated that schools and schooling ought to be the engines for social and cultural change. Dewey's proposal seems deceptively reasonable and logical. Yet no culture including American has said," create schooling that teach our young to be critical, independent, and creative thinkers. Teach them to challenge and question existing cultural ways and to have comfort with a constant state of ambiguity and change. It is the purpose of schooling to constantly produce those who will reform the future". Fundamental restructuring and reform in schooling is unlikely to occur unless such cultural demands are made. A major Western culture hero was made to drink hemlock when his students started to change Athens. Chances are that's a lesson in the culture for those who attempt fundamental change. Actually at this time the issue may be that schooling does not have to be an engine for change. The issue may be can schooling change enough to remain a part of the emerging change engine that is already running in the economic/political/social arena.

Educational reform and restructuring are currently being discussed throughout the educational community as well as in political and policy arenas. The schooling

crisis confronting the United States is the same one confronting other "Western" cultures: the social reproduction role for schooling effectively blocks schools from making the types of changes necessary to meet 21st Century demands. Even though the changing demographics and cultural diversity in the United States, as well as the difference between the numbers of those of retirement age and those who will be working in the United States, make it abundantly clear that maintaining and reproducing America's historical social hierarchy cannot long endure. Other Western cultures are having similar problems. In France, Germany, England, and other Western nations, class, race and gender issues are at the root of seething social/economic and political issues. In Japan, an Asian nation that has adopted a number of Western economic/social cultural ways, these same race, class and gender issues are becoming increasingly evident.

This Modernist historical Western conflict between freedom and capitalism if unresolved may block Western cultures from moving forward into the 21st Century. To do the work of a 21st Century global society, where the society that is best able to more fully develop its people will be a society that will flourish. At present those who manage, run and make policy for the Western worlds leading economic/social corporations and businesses believe that their historical cultural ways can be adapted to meet the demands of a changed 21st Century world without having to alter basic social conditions and outcomes. We think they do not understand cultural ways and they are wrong.

If we are to develop smart twenty-first century people to fit a different social/economic global culture, they must also come from those persons in the society that historically have been sorted to be the children and adults of lesser development and achievement: children of color, children of poverty and women. Educators and the schooling community in general receive increasing criticism

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because a large population of such young people have not been and are not being educated well. Why have our schools failed us is a common question. The implication is made by some (Ravich 1992) that it is now and has always been the intent of American schooling to develop all its young people to their best level of ability to a "common" culture; regardless of their social, gender and/or racial condition. Of course, no such intent or purpose has ever been the cultural assignment for schooling in the United States. History teaches us that children in Western cultures have been educated for racial and class dominance roles and capitalism, and therefore different life experiences of democracy, freedom, and development.

It is accurate that American schools are probably educating more young people better today than ever before. The children of poverty and of color, in terms of years of schooling, are better educated than their parents, but only because it requires more education to maintain a place in all levels of the social hierarchy. Children of color and poverty do not do as well as others in school because they are not supposed to do well - before or now. Everyone moves up educationally, but the historical social hierarchy is strongly maintained. So what is going on here? The concept of the melting pot-the common school, culturally, socially, and educationally, was and remains a myth--a cultural lie that maintains the existing social order. To pretend otherwise only conceals the real purposes of schooling. We argue that the current thrust of what is characterized as educational reform does not so far have as its purpose the altering to any significant degree of this historical schooling.

Historically, conservatives advocate and support schooling that firmly maintains America's historical social order. President Bush's Year 2000 is an excellent example of "reform" that maintains existing outcomes; it tinkers but does not risk really changing anything.

Johnathan Kozol (1991) catalogs the story of schooling in America's third world inner cities and other poverty areas. The children of poverty and the children of color in our urban centers and elsewhere are the historical descendants of those from the bottom of the social hierarchy. The ability of women in general to access a quality education equal to that provided to white middle class males is still a hoped for opportunity. America's inner cities too often mirror third world under developed countries that provide an inferior third world education to their children. It is the educational outcome American schooling is supposed to achieve for them. This is an ugly cultural historical truth that other cultural ways allow us to deny.

If educational reform is to have any meaning at all, then, it is this historical schooling culture that must change. If substantive reform is to occur, then research such as the Effective Schools could have a role. Such research might provide the structure that would allow those in schools to "learn their way to reform"- but only if there is a fundamental change in the culture of the schools and the schooling process.

We sometimes work with CEO's who lead various institutions and businesses in different settings where educational reform is being discussed. Out of the public arena, with their hair down, they tell us that they only need 25% of the population to be well educated in order to do the "intellectual work" of their organizations. That is almost the exact outcome of existing schooling. They believe this per cent or even less will also be true, well into the 21st Century.

It appears to us that the work developed from social science approaches to understanding organizations (of which Effective Schools is a part) and from a new and still emerging knowledge base about learning, provides sufficient knowledge and practice to invent and create schooling that provides excellence of intellectual and

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personal development for virtually all of the population. Such schooling would be life long and an ongoing adventure.

Certainly, there is considerable evidence to suggest that human intelligence does not fit the standard normal curve that is one of culture's ways of preserving the social order. The evidence appears convincing that at least 90% of the population has an intellectual capacity capable of being developed academically, at least through a university degree of quality. While all are not "the same", nevertheless the difference is relatively small for most and appears to be related more to experience, time, effort and resources rather than natural ability per se.

We contend that most educators involved in the system of schooling in the United States pursue refinement <tinkering> because they have been enculturated into this historical role for schooling. The current "Reform" movement of conservatives in the United States clearly has tinkering as a notion of reform. Why would they not? Educators are after all not some superior type of person or hero. They are members of a society with certain cultural ways and they, like most, follow them. In South Pacific, a play about racial and cultural prejudice, there is passage in a song sung by a young naval lieutenant from Philadelphia, "You have to be carefully taught to hate, from the time you are six, or seven, or eight. To hate the ones your family hates ...". It is culture that does the careful teaching to us all.

Educators believe that as a group they wish children well and essentially they do. Most believe these historical outcomes of schooling have nothing to do with them but are the fault of others. It is parents. It is society. It is the school board. It is the superintendent and her/his cohorts. It is the state. It is the Federal government. They believe it is these others who have the power and will have to change things--what can teachers and principals do? Many say, "I am only a teacher" or, "I am only a principal". You certainly can't ask me to risk by job and

my family". And they are right. Bravery and risk are not qualities that are used to select teachers or principals.

Unless reforms question basic cultural beliefs that maintain America's existing social order, then regardless of the quality of a reform or innovation, only tinkering will occur. Year 2000 structure, design and process has tinkering written all over it. Unless we are able to discuss and challenge the cultural undiscussables, (Argyris 1982) substantive reform is unlikely to emerge. We have not escaped our history, but repeated it. As long as racism is considered as a normal part of American life, as it is in most communities and deliberative bodies, then the primary block to reform remains in place. As long as it is incumbent to believe that in order to develop persons of wealth and power to advance the culture, many-many others must be poor, then a primary block to reform remains in place.

The question we must decide as a society is whether we are willing to endure the pain and ambiguity of reform in schooling. The 21st Century will be a century of technological development. It will also be a century of global human development. Societies that are able to develop (educate to a high degree) their people will be the societies whose cultural ways will endure. Each will have to decide how sacred and necessary their historical sorting cultural ways are.

The conservative movements in Western cultures, and particularly the United States the last decades of the 20th Century have clearly had as one of their major goals the continuation of the old sorting ways of their social order. The state of education in the United States and other Western cultures as well attest to the effectiveness of these efforts.

If we get these new cultures, do we know what to put in them so as to get outcomes that match our words? Do we know how to create transformational schooling that frees people to think, create, develop, change and be free? Do we know how to

create schools where the worth of a person is judged by the quality of character, of thought, of contribution, of human dignity, of justice and nothing else. We would propose such knowledge is available, if not totally, then at least enough to make the beginning. There is no need to wait.

Effective schools research may provide a description of the organizational setting necessary to develop such transformational schools. But the process and structure have very little impact if the substance of what is done in the structure and process does not also provide transformational learning as the core of the developmental efforts in a school. What might some of this substance be?

If we are to develop "reformed schools" there are two major considerations that must be addressed. One relates to how to develop these effective school cultures. Clearly having people learn a list of correlates and then directly develop strategies to implement them has not and will not result in any appreciable degree of establishment of effective school cultures. The second relates to a beginning knowledge of how learning <a desired outcome> is structured as opposed to teaching < planned and structured inputs>. We will discuss learning first and organizational development <creating an organizational culture supportive of change and of people> second. We may have forgotten that in fact a process (the way we do things and the cultural ways that accompany and are part of them) are the essential product and and content of schooling. Curriculum standards and alignment are attempts to control and limit learning.

At the risk of appearing simplistic, let us suggest that there are really only two things besides the learner to consider when designing learning: time and how the time is used. There are also primarily only two things to really understand about the, "amount of time". One is that what you spend productive time on is what will almost certainly be learned. If a teacher teaches something effectively for thirty

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minutes a day, students will learn less than if that same teacher teaches effectively the same thing for forty minutes. There is no particular time period that is the correct amount of time to use for learning that will guarantee "enough time" for everyone. Therefore any system that divides the day into short segments and/or periods that everyone follows every day, promotes failure and sorting for many children, and is not based upon sound learning principles. Similarly, if a teacher effectively teaches something for 24 weeks instead of 36 weeks, the same principle is involved. Time, learning's most precious ingredient, is the most commonly wasted ingredient in school.

The second major factor relating to the amount of time is a variation of the first. What I can learn in sixty minutes from a certain teaching method, you may be able to learn in thirty. It is not that you are necessarily brighter than I, or that I am brighter than you, although that may be some small part of it. It primarily means that how I learn, or how I'm taught, or the intellectual schema (experiences) that we have, are very different: we may be starting from different places, quantitatively and qualitatively. These differences are cultural much more than they are genetic. Your learning schema may be more in line with how a particular schooling is structured than mine. Thus the structure determines an outcome that advantages you and limits me much more than our abilities or intelligence.

That is, schooling's effect may sort you in one direction and me in another. That has almost nothing to do with either of our abilities to learn. The point is that each of us can learn what is supposed to be learned given sufficient time and appropriate instruction. Neurologically, our brains work and generally can be developed equally as well; at least within a certain range. Jeff Howard asserts that all persons who can speak and use a human language by the age of two or three can be developed intellectually and personally to whatever academic level is desired. He is

probably right.

A major reason many urban schools have such trouble getting their students' achievement to match that of white suburban and many white city and town students is the amount of time that is actually used for meaningful instruction (instruction that facilitates learning in students). We will use one urban school district of our acquaintance as an example. We have found that a number of other urban school districts share a similar organizational culture.

In this school district some students (20-25% do not show up at school for the first four weeks (there is still gainful employment from summer work and leisure activities, and from past experience they know they can miss the first 3-4 weeks of school with no consequence). Other students do not show up at the beginning of school where they are expected. Urban populations are mobile. Thus as many as one-fourth or more of the enrollment may not be where the district planned for the students to be in September. In early October classes are reorganized with teachers reassigned as well as students. So in many schools and classrooms teachers mark time until the reorganization occurs. "Why start something when you don't even know where you will be or what students you will have until October", many argue. So school, for far too many of these urban students, starts six weeks after school starts. Central office administrators declare this is all part of urban populations and there is nothing they can do about it. Believing that, of course, they do nothing to change their work or the outcome.

Twenty three days (3 and 1/2 weeks) are spent, over the course of the school year, testing . Testing is over by the middle of April and for all intents and purpose's in this school district, and many other urban schools, school is out. Beginning in the middle of February teachers start grilling and drilling students for standardized tests that assess the relatively unimportant-for a multiple choice

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culturally biased assessment, whose outcomes are highly correlated with race, class and gender. Urban teachers try to prepare children to be successful in these tests designed for their failure. It is a way to limit urban children's development in the name of improving them. The politics of local school communities demands it. So most meaningful learning and development stops in these urban school districts after February.

The consequence is, that there may be at most 20-22 weeks of meaningful instruction going on each school year. The average grade level growth on achievement tests in this urban school district is .65 a year. Of course, that is how much they are meaningfully taught. Most suburban children and many rural city children get 10-12 more weeks of meaningful instruction each year. Over the course of 13 years of schooling, that amounts to a significant amount of learning time difference (the equivalent of 3-4 years of instruction). Why do urban students score below suburban and many city school district's students? That's how much they are taught. It is not a mystery. It is also not genetic.

Urban teachers are required to emphasize control and discipline as their basic relationship with their students. Urban teachers are expected to use direct instruction and mastery learning- so called effective teaching techniques. The research on direct instruction and mastery learning as they are implemented in urban schools is also clear. At best such implementations enable urban schools to get 40%-50% of urban students at or above grade level. Success in direct instruction approaches for students depends more upon the experiences they bring to school than what the teacher does. If Mastery Learning is defined as curriculum alignment and students getting 80% mastery of numerous specific objectives, then failure for many urban students is automatic. If on the other hand we seek a schooling to put into effective school structures that will at the same time provide schooling that is

equitable for all and not conditional upon race, class and gender, then there is also some research available that may help us. We suggest four principals as a beginning basis and as examples, but recognize there are others that could be included.

FOUR LEARNING PRINCIPLES

1. Learning Must Be Developmental: This concept has been discussed in many ways, and is generally understood at some level by almost all teachers as, "you must start where a learner is". Others say, " learning must be linked or connected". Put simply, if effective learning is to occur, instruction must enable learners to connect what is to be learned to schema they already have. Or active experiences must be provided that will developed schemata necessary for certain content or knowledge. There must be something within the student to which new knowledge, skills, or processes can be connected. Learning begins where a particular learner is, not necessarily where a particular curriculum, grade level, subject or even teacher's expectation wants them to be. Any other approach means to start instruction where a learner is not. Such an approach is not only poor theory and illogical; it doesn't work.

We often ask teachers as we seek to develop a reform agenda, " how many of you believe that children learn in the same way and at the same rate? How many believe that students begin school each fall well prepared by their previous schooling to learn what you are expected to teach in as your assignment? How many of you believe that you can punish children into good behavior. No one ever raises their hand except at time a few for punishment. "Then why do we organize schools and teaching so that children are taught the same curriculum, at the same time, in the same way, in fragmented time, and punished for making mistakes and asking questions", we ask? Why do we structure schools and schooling in ways that we all know do not match the

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way children learn?

The explanation that is often reached by teachers and principals is, "we don't know any other way to do it, or we don't have time or money for other ways". They may be correct. That is how schools of education prepare them to teach. That is how the schools they work in are organized. That is how most of the other teachers they know practice their craft. That is what school boards pay people to do. If we are to build schools around learning, then we must be willing to throw away our old ways of structuring schooling and create diversity as standard practice. Many educators when examining such reformed structures say,"but it doesn't look like school".

It is an informal covenant in the culture of schooling in America. Schools have to look like the way schools are supposed to look.

2. **Learning Is Not Naturally Sequential:** How we as learners learn something is not necessarily sequential. That is, what appears to be a natural order for one may be very different for someone else: they have different schema. Curricula may in fact be sequential and rational (to the curriculum developer) in how subject matter and skills are presented. Learning, however, does not always (or sometimes ever) follow a curriculum developer's rational and organized processes. Learners will skip over and be able to learn more advanced content, processes or skills and will not always learn what is assumed to be a simpler or less complex curriculum. This is just as true for content/skill areas like mathematics, and reading, particularly in the early stages, as it is for content/concept processes and disciplines like social studies, and sciences.

It all depends upon what type of cultural/language schema a learner brings to a lesson. A curriculum's structure may be in the mind of a developer's experiences, understandings and language, or a curriculum is a cultural code usually from the dominant culture, or, more than likely, both. A curriculum approach to instruction

is often not related to learning. The failure is in the curriculum-- something culture creates, rather than in the ability of the children to learn. The children are smart. It is the curriculum and its accompanying instruction that are dumb.

Perhaps we need to view schooling as developing process schema in learners for each of the academic areas, rather than aligning thousands of individual pieces of information and skills to be "learned" and somehow connected over the lifetime of a curriculum.

A learning outcome approach requires that teachers be held accountable for development <improvement> of learning ability within all students rather than covering a "developmental" curriculum. Covering the stuff is not the same as learning the stuff. Teachers may be responsible for both but must be accountable only for the latter.

3. LEARNING MUST BE CONCEPT/SCHEMA BUILDING: Learning is generative in that it tends toward developing new or completing existing cognitive schema. The brain is constantly receiving data and information from the environment through our senses. The brain's primary function is to organize and make sense of all this data in order to promote survival and growth. Therefore, our brains are constantly seeking to order the environment (interpret data through language and symbolism) so that it can be manipulated and understood by each of us. The brain does this by developing schemata (models and patterns) that appear to explain things. These patterns and models relate to, skills, knowledge, values, processes of learning, understanding of relationships, cultural programming, etc. The different hemispheres and areas of the brain select which data belongs to their schema and then file them away for future reference.

The purpose of all this explanation is to make the point that a good deal of learning must be experience (sensory) oriented, especially if it is something new.

Some children will come from cultural or social environments that will not have developed a substantial schema (provided experiences) that allows them to be highly successful in a host culture's curriculum. Teachers should have a "cultural translation role" that links to and adapts existing schemata to developing new schema (experiences). A way many good teachers think about this is, " a teacher may not be able to teach to knowledge (schema) that is not there, but can teach to a creativity and imagination that is".

A teacher then, must constantly seek to create "pictures in the mind" in the minds of learners about the ideas involved in school. We call this active or experiential learning (doing it). The same process is true concerning teachers in schools as they learn new cultural ways with one another.

This may often include having a teacher create new "pictures in his/her mind" about what learning and teaching are. If a teacher cannot imagine what a new teaching approach or structure "looks like", then that teacher will not be able to implement that new something. Many staff developers seem to forget this bit of learning theory, and ultimately fail in staff development. Craft learning, at its simplest level in schooling, is a process whereby teachers help create pictures for one another of what it is they are trying to do.

4. LEARNING IS MULTI-MODAL WITH PREFERRED MODES: Data are received through the senses and transmitted to the brain. We therefore learn by hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, and "sensing". Eventually for some, somewhere in the teen years or after, it becomes possible to learn by thinking or intellectualizing <manipulating schema>. When the different senses are jointly involved in learning something new, a greater potential for learning occurs. Learning is particularly enhanced when the learner is given a process that enables him/her to manipulate and control multi-modal learning contexts and processes (I learn it when I do it).

Additionally, we know that a person may have preferred learning modalities. For example, some need quiet and learn well visually. Others need music, or at least some sound to assist their learning and these persons often prefer oral to visual learning. Some work well in groups and need the interaction and activity of the social context while others are individual in their learning, and on and on. We cannot as yet fully explain how or why all this occurs, only that is does.

What this suggests is: if a learner's preferred mode can be determined, and it can at least at some gross level, then using that mode of learning when developing new or more difficult schema will enhance the potential for learning and achievement.

On the other hand, as learners becomes more independent, the teacher should move them to other modalities so as to fully develop and build all their learning senses. Eventually, the person who becomes a proficient lifelong learner is the one who can learn well in several modalities. This requires that schools have a wide array of technology and instructional materials related to different modes of learning. It requires that teachers use, with a high level of skill, this diverse array of learning technologies on a daily and regular basis with all the children.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES THAT SUPPORT LEARNING IN URBAN SETTINGS:

If the learning paradigms and effective school structures discussed here are to be implemented in schools, then it must take place we suggest in school contexts that support and promote such learning. These schools will be substantively and even radically different classroom and schooling structures than those found in traditional schooling. In some cases we must picture schools in our minds that have not been experienced yet. Thus, we must keep their structures fluid, somewhat unstructured and ambiguous. These new schooling cultures and structures must be

organizations that are free to learn.

If one looks at some of the available research regarding implementation of school structures that promote renewing and substantial restructuring of schooling then a picture of a particular cultural ethos emerges. This research comes from the work of (Argyris 1982, Miles 1983, Sarason 1977, 1990 Edmonds 1979, Argyris 1982, Schmuck & Runkel, 1989, Levine & Lezotte 1989) and many others. Such research suggests the types of organizational cultures that need to be developed to match the learning approaches discussed above. We can even describe these as developmental organizational learning cultures. Some may view these an amplification of the Effective School structures, as they may be, just as the Effective School structures are amplifications of the previous Organization Development research. What we have tried to add are the relationships, values, beliefs (culture), and etc., that appear to be a necessary part of schooling cultures that provide equitable outcomes. What are these organizational cultures?:

1) There must be a double loop communication and information sharing process in the school structure. A persistent effort is maintained to collect accurate information concerning the performance of the school for students, administration and staff. This data is known by all and informs shared decision making and planning.

2) There must be a problem solving focus in basic organizational structures including teaming and decision making through collaboration and cooperative work. Basic decisions in schools are primarily made by those who are responsible for implementing those decisions.

3) There is an ethos in the school of a cohesive family that works together and supports one another; thus providing safe non threatening and trusting relationshps as conditions of life in the school. There is a close connection and active relationship between the school family and the home family whatever it is. Regardless of other issues, the school family is trusting, supporting, caring, and safe.

4) Hard work, persistence and determination characterize the level of effort for all in the school. These efforts are focused upon learning through instructional arrangements that are flexible varied and successful. Outcomes are valued more than inputs.

5) There is a collective and shared vision that the purpose and mission of

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the school are equitable outcomes for all members of the school family and this vision drives the day to day efforts as well as planning in the school.

6) Processes of learning and thinking are emphasized and are the organizing structure for instruction, particularly including the higher order thinking and learning processes. There is no established schedule for everyone to do the same things at the same times. Curriculum content, skills and subject matter are the tools and "stuff" used to develop the processes of learning and thinking and they are selected to match the culture and schema of the particular learners involved. Whole group instruction is a seldom used mode of teaching.

7) There is active learning going on all the time among the staff in regard to changing and altering time, instruction and school structure. Nothing is ever closed or beyond or above consideration for change. The school structure and climate is in a constant state of evolving, investigating and learning. Unconventional, maverick and ambivalence describe qualities admired in the school.

There is considerable descriptive literature that reveals such organizational settings and culture. There is very little available research or knowledge that informs us concerning how to develop leaders for such schools, particularly if such leaders must come from existing school structures and leadership development programs. For example it is not sufficient to just say, "administrators must learn how to share power in a participative manner". For teachers and others must also learn the exact same thing. Neither a majority of America's teachers or administrators appear to be willing as yet to develop and live in the type of school described here. The biggest step to effective schools may just be the task of convincing those in schools to make substantive changes rather than tinkering with existing school arrangements and techniques.

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